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SENATOR RAIKES: Yes, so if you'd like...if you'd like me to start that now, I will.

SENATOR CUDABACK: We are opening on the committee amendments, Senator Raikes.

SENATOR RAIKES: Okay, okay. The...let me begin those...the comments on the committee amendments with a few comments about the issue. This is, in a sense, a new issue to the Education Committee this session. It's certainly not a new issue in public education, but it's sort of made it's first appearance in a very long time this session. Interest is prompted by, among other things, some...some lawsuits which one of them I think is still pending. Another one has been dismissed. It is a special issue, however, with public education and one that I think I can convince you is a complicated one. Involved in the issue are a number of landmarks. First off is the constitutional language which says that all students are, I'm paraphrasing and I hope you give me that, all students between the ages of 5 and 1 or 5 and 21 should rec...shall receive free instruction in the common schools. Certainly, that is one landmark or benchmark for this sort of a discussion. A second sort of issue you get into is the actual operation of schools: course offerings, which of those course offerings are required; financing the school, generally; and specific activities that are undertaken by the school, and, in particular, I think as you're probably all aware, there are certain activities in public schools that are a combination of education and what you might consider personal use. One example, maybe not a very good one, is that if you take a woodworking class and you build a bookshelf, it may well be that what you finish you would take home, so that whatever wood you put into that bookshelf was, in fact, for your own personal use. You have, I think, less tangible evidence of that in many instances where there is an activity that is carried on in a school system which is a combination of education and that kind of personal use. The question becomes, if you have those sorts of activities, do taxpayers, those who fund public schools, pay for the personal use part of it as well as the education part of it? If your answer is yes, then the question becomes, do schools continue to offer those sorts of activities? So that's one of the complications that arises. Another one,